

REQUEST FOR A CHANGE IN ARTICLE 40 OF THE  
CODE Z.N.(S.)2250

By Marian H. Pettibone (*National Museum of Natural  
History, Washington D.C. 20560, U.S.A.*)

I am asking the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to seriously consider changing Article 40 of the Code concerning the conservation of a family-group name after 1960 and making it retroactive. A family-group name should reflect the name and meaning of the type genus. If the name of the type genus goes into synonymy, the family name should also be replaced, with the exception of a name long established in the literature and whose meaning is well understood. I cite the following case in Polychaeta as a basis for my objection to the rule.

In the NEREIDIDAE, *Micronereis variegata* Claparède, 1863 has long been considered to be an aberrant member of the family and referred to often in the literature because of its unique features. Four species were subsequently added to *Micronereis*.

*Notophycus minutus* Knox & Cameron, 1970 was placed in a new family NOTOPHYCIDAE. *Phyllodocella bodegae* Fauchald & Belman, 1972 was added to this family.

In a revisionary study on the species of *Micronereis*, Banse, 1977, *Essays on Polychaetous Annelids, Allan Hancock Foundation*, referred *Notophycus* and *Phyllodocella* to *Micronereis* and placed them in a subfamily NOTOPHYCINAE, with type genus *Micronereis* (syn.: *Notophycus*) following Article 40.

We now have a subfamily with the single genus *Micronereis* and eight species (according to a recent revisionary study by Hannelore Paxton). It is only logical that it should be called MICRONEREIDINAE, reflecting the well-known genus *Micronereis*, and not *Notophycus*, based on a misunderstanding of the diagnostic characters and not well-known.



